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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

BUREAU OF INTELLIGENCE AND RESEARCH

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TO : The Secretary  
THROUGH: S/S  
FROM : INR - Roger Hillsman

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INTELLIGENCE NOTE: Khrushchev Briefs Satellites, Maps Policy Line

Unprecedented Trek of East European Leaders to Moscow. Between October 29-November 4, Khrushchev and leading members of the Soviet Presidium conferred in quick succession with the Party leaders of Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Bulgaria, and Poland. Individual country consultations, rather than a conference were in themselves unusual. The speed with which one delegation followed another was quite unprecedented in the history of Soviet-satellite relations; not even after the Hungarian revolt in 1956 were consultations compressed into so short a period of time. Although little official information concerning the talks has been released, the principal topics can be deduced.

All of the consultations were obviously concerned with a review of the Soviet posture in the Cuban crisis. Consultations with the Czech, East German, and Bulgarian leaders must also have dealt with their separate domestic problems, which have been rendered more acute by Soviet policy toward Cuba.

Moscow Pushes Peaceful Coexistence. Moscow has apparently advised its satellites that a stress on peaceful coexistence should be the Soviet bloc's main posture in the wake of the Cuban crisis. This is the theme of Gomulka's Pravda article of November 5, and constitutes the gist of Bulgarian First Secretary Zhivkov's opening remarks at the Bulgarian Party Congress.

Both statements contain nearly identical passages eulogizing Khrushchev as the leader who saved the world from a nuclear war which the US tried to unleash, and both stress that "there is no other road" apart from peaceful coexistence. The "three main questions" on which the preservation of world peace now hinges are listed as: (1) the "signing of peace treaty with Germany" and normalization of the situation in West Berlin; (2) the normalization of the situation in the Caribbean; and (3) the implementation of "general and total disarmament." This is the policy which has been under increasingly heavy attack by Peiping and its Albanian ally.

Separate Talks Politically Advisable. Separate consultations with each of the East European leaders summoned to Moscow, rather than a conference, appeared advisable because: (1) some resistance to Soviet

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demands could have been expected from the Czech, East German, and Bulgarian leaders, and their individual objections to Soviet proposals could not be allowed to coalesce into a common opposition; (2) Khrushchev had to insure East European backing for his "peaceful coexistence" policy to strengthen his hand in the conflict with Peiping and might have preferred to have East German and Bulgarian internal Party problems, aggravated by that policy, aired in private; (3) a "Soviet bloc" conference at this time would have resulted in time-consuming debates.

Satellite Backing of Soviet Foreign Policy Apparently Secured. In spite of the absence of revealing communiques concerning the four East European visits to Moscow, some of the content of the talks can be deduced.

Czechoslovakia. On the eve of Novotny's visit, the Czechs finally blew up the mammoth Stalin statute towering over Prague, but this long-delayed gesture probably did not help them much in reducing Soviet demands upon them. In spite of considerable domestic economic difficulties and badly overextended resources, the Czech regime appears to have been asked by Khrushchev to make further commitments in aiding Cuba.

East Germany. The dismay which apparent Soviet acquiescence to US demands on Cuba is reported to have caused among SED officials in the Berlin context must have been a principal concern of Ulbricht. The length of Ulbricht's stay in Moscow--October 31 to November 5--indicates that, there may have been lengthy discussion of Soviet tactics in Berlin in the coming period.

Bulgaria. The strong Stalinist sentiment and persistent factionalism in the Bulgarian Party have presented a problem to the USSR for some time, particularly in connection with Soviet policy of wooing Yugoslavia. Soviet policy in the Cuban crisis appears to have had the predictable effect of putting new life into the Stalinist opposition. Indeed, toward the end of October the press contained some indications that Bulgarian Party leader Zhivkov might have been ready to compromise with the Stalinists and pacify the opposition, presumably in order to avoid a show down at the Party Congress, opening November 5. Zhivkov's hurried trip to Moscow on November 3 appears to have changed all that. Destalinization, which includes the just announced purge of Premier Yugov, peaceful coexistence, disarmament, and better relations with Yugoslavia appear to be the mottos of the Congress, which had been billed originally as one devoted to economics. After the Bulgarian Party Congress is over this wavering satellite should be clearly aligned with the USSR against Communist China, and improvement of relations with Yugoslavia should follow a less hesitant course.

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Poland. The Soviet leadership did not have to summon Party leader Gomulka to insure his backing for a policy of peaceful co-existence. It could be certain of it without consultations. Gomulka's November 4 trip to Moscow was most likely motivated by a need to map out Poland's role in Soviet strategy on Berlin and disarmament. Poland's past role in disarmament proposals and Gomulka's emphasis on disarmament in the November 5 Pravda point particularly to the latter.

Hungary and Rumania. Hungary's Janos Kadar is now in Moscow for the 45th anniversary of the Revolution. His trip, however, seems to have been undertaken largely for the sake of appearances since his backing of Khrushchev's foreign policy can be assumed in advance, and Hungary needs no further guidance in its task of improving its own international standing. Rumanian Party leader Gheorghiu Dej stopped in Moscow on his way from Southeast Asia the previous week-end. He may, therefore, require a further briefing in the near future, but there are--as usual--no apparent pressing Rumanian problems to trouble the Soviets.

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